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BARRIO AZTECA GANG MEMBERS SENTENCED TO FEDERAL PRISON

(EL PASO, TEXAS) Several gang members in El Paso—considered to be the hierarchy of the Barrio Azteca gang—have been sentenced to 15 years in federal prison for conspiring together to conduct the affairs of an enterprise through a pattern of racketeering.

Appearing before United States District Judge David Briones on Friday, 45-year-old **BENJAMIN ALVAREZ** (a.k.a. T-Top), 27-year-old **JOHN GUANA**, 42-year-old **CARLOS ENRIQUE DELGADO-PEREA** (a.k.a. Shotgun), 32-year-old **LUIS RUBIO VELASQUEZ** (a.k.a. Enforcer), and 37-year-old **RAMON ARMENDARIZ** (a.k.a. Sleepy) each pled guilty to the RICO (Racketeering Influenced and Corrupt Organization) charge and was sentenced to a 15-year prison term to run consecutively to any existing prison terms. Also on Friday, 27-year-old **HUMERTO PAURA** pled guilty to the RICO charge and was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment. Paura's sentence will run concurrent with a 25-year state sentence for murder he just began serving.

On June 12, 2002, two other gang members—39-year-old **MANUEL FERNANDEZ** (a.k.a. Grande) and 29-year-old **FRANCISCO RAMERIZ** (a.k.a. Bule)—pled guilty to the RICO charge and are currently awaiting sentencing.

The Barrio Azteca—formed in the late 1980's—is an extremely violent gang operating in the El Paso / Ciudad Juarez area, as well as in federal correctional facilities, the state prison system, and local jails. Their enterprise included extortion, assaults, murder, attempted murder, money laundering and narcotics trafficking.

This case resulted from an Organized Crime / Drug Enforcement Task Force investigation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Administration, El Paso Police Department, El Paso County Sheriff's Office and the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

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